United Nations S/PRST/2006/38

Security Council

Distr.: General
9 August 2006

Original: English

Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 5509th meeting of the Security Council, held on 9 August 2006, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "Peace consolidation in West Africa", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council, recalling its relevant resolutions and the statements of its President, stresses the importance of addressing the issue of peace consolidation in West Africa in a comprehensive and coordinated manner. It recognizes the need for such an approach for durable solutions to the conflicts in West Africa and to explore ways and means to promote sustainable peace, security and development.

"The Security Council welcomes the transition from war to democratic rule in Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau and Liberia, as well as current efforts aimed at implementing measures leading to free and fair elections in Côte d'Ivoire. It also notes that the security situation in those countries remains generally stable but fragile.

"The Security Council stresses the need to build the capacity of national institutions to address the root causes of conflict as an essential part of peace consolidation, especially in the areas of political and economic governance as well as the rule of law and the fight against impunity.

"The Security Council recalls the measures it has implemented on the illegal exploitation of natural resources in the region and encourages member States of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to promote transparent and sustainable exploitation of such resources.

"The Security Council stresses the primary role of each West African Government in peace consolidation for the benefit of all citizens and reiterates the importance of all leaders working together for peace and security in the region.

"The Security Council considers that illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons still poses a threat to peace and security in the region. In this connection, it welcomes the decision of ECOWAS member States to transform the Moratorium on the Import, Export and Manufacture of Light weapons into a binding Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and Other Related Materials. It further urges all States, both within and outside the region, to ensure compliance with its existing arms embargoes in West

06-46170 (E) 100806

Africa and for States within ECOWAS to ratify the Convention as soon as possible to enable it to come into effect promptly.

"The Security Council considers that civil society, including women's organizations, has a role to play in supporting peace consolidation initiatives in the region and that their efforts in this regard deserve to be supported as appropriate.

"The Security Council underlines the crucial importance of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of ex-combatants, taking into account the special needs of child soldiers and women, and encourages the international community to work in close partnership with the countries concerned. It further affirms the need to find lasting solutions to the problem of youth unemployment in order to prevent the recruitment of such youth by illegal armed groups.

"The Security Council considers reform of the security sector an essential element for sustainable peace and stability in West Africa and urgently calls on the donor community and the international financial institutions to coordinate their efforts to support the States concerned.

"The Security Council stresses the continued need for assisting West African States and ECOWAS to curb illicit cross-border activities.

"The Security Council reiterates the importance of finding effective solutions to the problem of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the region and urges the States in the region, in collaboration with relevant international organizations and donor countries, to create the necessary conditions for their voluntary and safe return.

"The Security Council welcomes the positive role played by the international community and civil society in addressing the humanitarian situation in many parts of the region and urges them to provide adequate resources as part of a coordinated humanitarian response strategy to improve the human security of the people of West Africa in need of such protection.

"The Security Council stresses the need to ensure improved coordination of donor initiatives in order to make the best use of available resources, as well as encourages donor partners to redeem their pledges in a timely manner.

"The Security Council further stresses the need for continued and enhanced cooperation between the United Nations, ECOWAS and the African Union in peace consolidation initiatives, based on an integrated approach and with the aim of maximizing the use of available resources. In this connection, it commends the role of the United Nations Office in West Africa, as well as other United Nations offices, missions and agencies in the region in facilitating, in close cooperation with the ECOWAS Executive Secretariat and its member States, the achievement of peace and security priorities of the region. It further encourages the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa and the United Nations missions in the region to continue their efforts in coordinating United Nations activities to ensure their improved cohesion and maximum efficiency.

"The Security Council underscores the importance and the role of the Peacebuilding Commission in assisting countries emerging from conflict to achieve sustainable peace and stability.

"The Security Council emphasizes the regional dimension of peace and security in West Africa and requests the Secretary-General, in consultation with the ECOWAS secretariat, to submit to it by the end of the year a report with recommendations on the cooperation between the United Nations missions deployed in the region and on the cross-border issues in West Africa."